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CHRISTIANITY AND JUDAISM:

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An Essay

BY

GUSTAF H. DALMAN, D.D., Ph.D.

Professor of Theology in the University of Leipzig

Translated from the German

BY

The Rev. G. H. BOX, M.A.

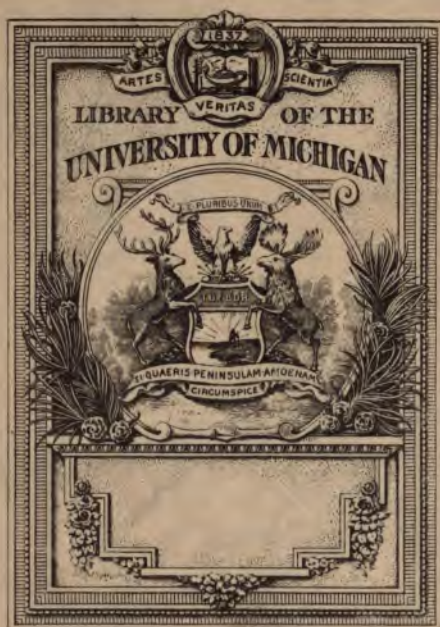
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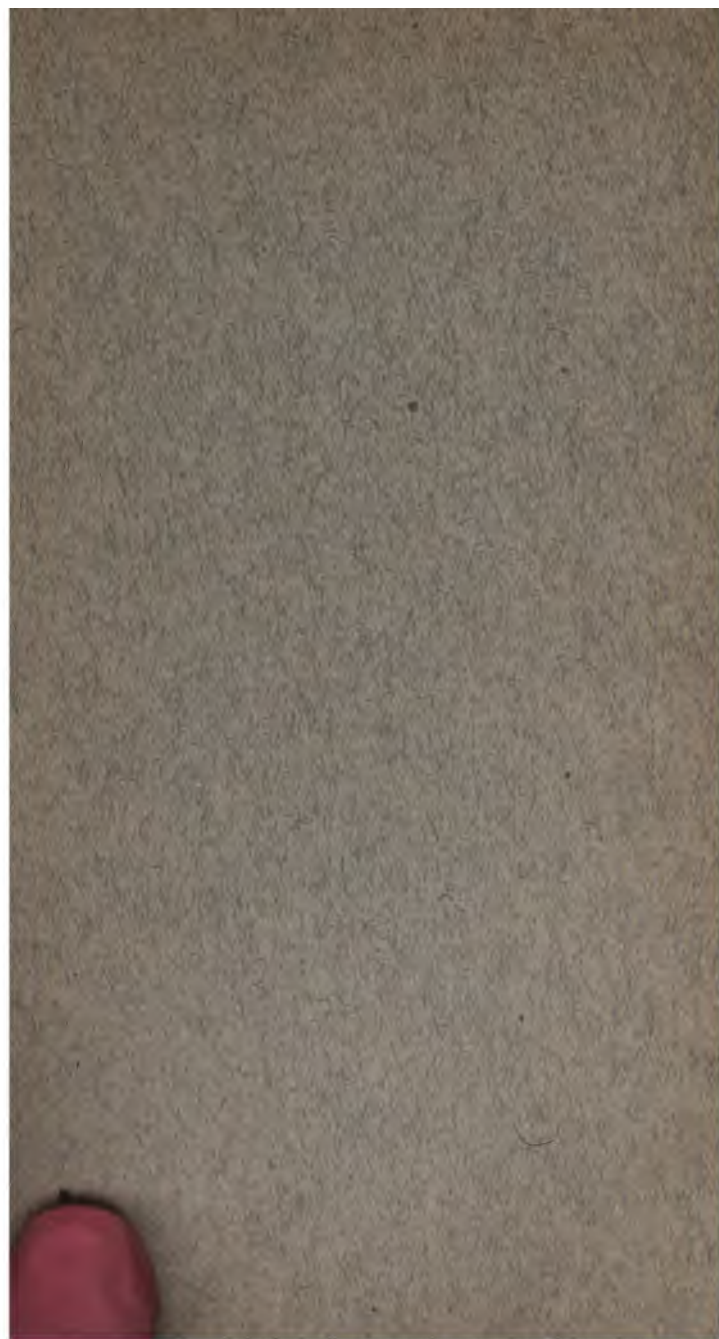
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Christianity and Judaism

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Christianity and Judaism:

An Essay

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1901

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE following pamphlet, which was published in German for the first time about two years ago, comes from the pen of a Christian scholar who possesses the rare qualification of being able to do justice to a faith that, in many vital points, is in sharp conflict with his own, without in the smallest degree abating or understating his personal conviction of the truth and superiority of the religion he himself professes. The best evidence of the truth of this statement that I can quote is an avowal from the other side. In a long and interesting

notice of Dr. Dalman's little book—which he calls a 'most remarkable pamphlet'—Mr. C. G. Montefiore says :—

"Dr. Dalman is not merely acquainted with Talmud and Midrash, but he is also familiar with modern Jewish literature. He knows the feelings and opinions of modern Jews, both of the orthodox and reform divisions. And yet this enlightened, unprejudiced, and well-informed man is an earnest evangelical Christian, convinced of the superiority and truth of his own creed, and while quite fair to the other side, an uncompromising exponent of what he believes to be its weakness and deficiencies. A truly remarkable combination." *

So competent did Dr. Dalman's insight into matters Jewish appear, even in Jewish eyes, that he was openly spoken of in the pages of *The Jewish Chronicle* (Sept. 21st, 1900) as a 'scholarly convert' (from Judaism to Christianity). This mistaken inference was corrected

* *Jewish Quarterly Review*, xii. p. 736 (July 1900).

by Dr. Dalman himself in a later issue of the same paper (Oct. 5th, 1900). Dr. Dalman there says: "Please allow me to state that no drop of Jewish blood is running in my veins. Interest in Rabbinical literature and in the welfare of the Jewish nation ought to be common to all Christian theologians."

It is the earnest hope of the translator that the publication of Dr. Dalman's pamphlet in an English form may help—in however small a degree—to promote on the part of both Christian and Jewish readers a deeper and more intelligent apprehension of the real positions maintained by their respective religions, in moral and theological as well as practical points; for only so can that mutual understanding be attained for which Dr. Dalman makes so forcible a plea.

It is not to be expected that all the positions maintained in the following pages

will be equally acceptable to all who may read them. Some will naturally form a much higher and more favourable estimate of Zionism than is here given.* Others, again, especially those whose ecclesiastical circumstances have given them the opportunity of seeing what vitality and power of persistence for good have been actually realized by the idea of a national Church such as that with which we in England are familiar, will find it hard to believe that the ideal of a Hebrew-Christian national Church is so undesirable, and, in fact, so unlikely a consummation as Dr. Dalman thinks. But whatever view may, or may not, be taken on these points, Dr. Dalman's criticism will always be found stimulating, suggestive, and valuable.

* On this remark Dr. Dalman makes the following comment: "I like Zionism as a national movement; its Palestinian aims, however, are—in this century at least—hopeless."

Of the value of the masterly outline-comparison and contrast between Jewish and Christian theology, which forms the last part of the following pamphlet, there can scarcely be two opinions. I venture to commend it to the perusal of all for whom theological questions have any interest.

My warm thanks are due to the author and his publishers (Messrs. J. C. Heinrichs of Leipzig) for permission to publish this translation, and to the author for specially revising his work in its English dress.

G. H. BOX.

MERCHANT TAYLORS' SCHOOL, E.C.

February 1901.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

It was the German "Evangelical Union" which, by inviting me to Berlin for the purpose of delivering an apologetical lecture in 1898, furnished the occasion which led to the production of the following Essay. Consequently it is based upon suppositions implied by German surroundings.

As, however, British and German Protestantism are sister-children of one Father, who taught them the religion of Faith without Works, it may be permitted to hope that my words will not sound altogether unfamiliar to British readers. At least the Translator certainly has a right to secure a favourable reception.

G. H. DALMAN.

LEIPZIG, *March* 1901.

Christianity and Judaism

OF public discussion between Christians and Jews there has, during the last twenty years, been no lack.

The racial feeling against the Jewish people that is everywhere dormant has been kindled afresh by anti-Semitism, which demands that the Jew, as a foreigner, should be deprived of the rights of citizenship. The Jews themselves are a standing witness to the fact that they fall no whit behind other citizens of the State in patriotism. In this regard the official exponents of Judaism insist that the Jews are differentiated from other citizens solely by their religion. Zionism, on the other hand, proclaims unreservedly the distinctiveness of

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the Jewish race ; it merely allows that this is not incompatible with a genuine attachment to the corporate life of another nation.

The position assumed by the Zionists has excited widespread attention. The rejoinder of official Judaism met with a total lack of interest and sympathy. It even provoked positive displeasure, because it failed to respond to the feeling of the great mass of our people.* In the eyes of the latter the Jews stand not merely for the exponents of a particular religion, but for the members of a particularly modified nationality.

If the Jewish religion was spoken of openly in this connection, this was done merely to characterize the Jewish nationality, and not from any zeal for the true religion. In all discussions between Jews and Christians no sign could be discerned of a genuine attempt to grapple with the points at issue between the religions of Christianity and Judaism.

It is a curious fact, but one that in this con-

* [*I.e.*, the German nation.—Tr.]

troversy is constantly coming into evidence, that the religion which is next-of-kin to Christianity is relegated to the category of those to which least attention is paid. So far is this carried, that censure even is meted out to those who concern themselves with Judaism, as though an active interest in Islam, Buddhism, or even in the fetishism of a Bantu tribe would be of greater utility to the State, the Nation, and the Church.

Yet the literature of the Jewish religion, throughout its whole extent, is as accessible to Christians as to Jews. None of the non-Christian religions can be more easily studied. If anyone should desire merely to acquaint himself as to what the religion of the German Jews in all its bearings actually is, he could do so in a sufficiently trustworthy manner, even from books written in German. And still there is heard, even in our Parliaments, the ceaseless complaint about the supposed unrevealed 'mysteries' of the Jewish religion, as though it were the fault of the religion that

it remains unknown to those who will not put themselves to the trouble of learning what there is to know!

This position of affairs must be characterized as an unsatisfactory one. The public attention that is directed to the Jews must lead on the part of everyone concerned, above all else, to an unbiassed consideration of the essential character of Judaism, otherwise it will never produce positive results. We often read of a solution of the Jewish question, but the labour which might lead to such a consummation is avoided. It is characteristic of our time that material, social, and national interests stand in the forefront; that the power of spiritual forces, and especially the power of religion, is undervalued. It is quite consistent with this state of mind that the importance of the Jewish religion should fail to be understood.

But we Protestants have no excuse for yielding to the prevailing tendency. It may suit the genius of the Roman Church to use social and national antinomies to the utmost

as means for maintaining and aggrandizing its own power, to regard itself as, like its opponents, a political force and to act accordingly. The Protestant Church has the Gospel for its standard. God's Word constitutes its weapons. It is either a religious force in the people's life, and in that case is certain of victory over every foe—or it is nothing. Protestants must fight for religion, and from this standpoint must consider whether individuals are for or against religion. Religion is for us, however, the Protestant faith, which is founded on the Gospel, and will therefore fight for the Gospel even unto death.

MANY are of opinion, I know, that we are quit of any obligation to come to an understanding with the Jewish religion, in view of the consideration that the Jewish people may, at some future date, cease to have any connection with our nation or its affairs. But no prob-

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ability can be pleaded for the view that, within any measurable time, the governing political factors will allow of a measure depriving the Jews of the rights of citizenship or sanctioning their expulsion—a proceeding, indeed, which could not be carried out without a breach of justice.* It would be just as futile to expect a voluntary emigration. Moreover, Jewish Zionism will not issue in a withdrawal of the Jews from Europe. The Zionists themselves do not think of such a possibility. Without doubt their idea of a special Jewish *territorium* will not be realized in the immediate future. In that case we have in the Zionist organization merely a new *Alliance Israélite Universelle*, which, unlike the older society, does not primarily seek to advance the cause of Jewish educational affairs in the East, but to promote Palestinian agri-

* Bernhard Cohn, in his pamphlet, *Vor dem Sturm* (Berlin, 1896), may be right in the assumption that the desire that Germany should not number any Jews among its citizens is a widespread one. But it does not therefore follow that an expulsion would be resorted to.

culture, and thereby acts in the interests of a more vigorous Jewish racial stock.

But even if the wildest hopes of the Zionists are realized, and Palestine is re-peopled by the Jews of Russia, Roumania, Persia, and North Africa, this new Judæa will not again become the centre of the Jewish race—the common goal for which all hearts yearn, to gain which every nerve is strained. Neither the Law of Moses nor its Talmudic development can ever in a Jewish community attain to universal acceptance and practice. The Mosaic Law availed for a particular stage of civilization which can never return; besides, God Himself has, through His perfect revelation in Christ, rendered it hopelessly out of date. The Rabbinical legislation is, in important particulars, pure theory only, and altogether unsuited for practical application. The introduction of the one legal code or the other would spell ruin to the Jewish State in the first year of its existence. Besides, agreement on this important point among the various

Jewish parties would never be attainable. In order to satisfy the conscience of the orthodox, it would be necessary to describe the new Judæa as a new form of the 'Exile,' and now, as before, to await the Messianic age.

As regards the building of a temple and the re-establishment of sacrificial worship, it is quite allowed on all sides that no party in Judaism can desire it. For 1800 years all have been convinced that the Jewish religion is complete without the worship of sacrifices. Prayer and repentance better accomplish what Israel formerly secured in the sacrifice. It would involve an embarrassing obligation, even for the most orthodox Jews of Russia, if sacrifice should again be offered. Every excuse would be seized upon to rid themselves of such a necessity. Moreover, with the sacrificial worship, the old jealousy between priests and scribes would again revive in undesirable fashion.

The news — circulated through Christian papers—about the Temple columns which are

alleged to be already in process of manufacture in Italy is, in all probability, a newspaper *canard* of the usual kind. Should there be anything in it, it would be attributable to the notion of some singular individual, Jew or Christian, to which no further significance can be attached.

Much more likely to be realized is the plan for the establishment of a Jewish university in Jerusalem. But even in that case it is not to be expected that New Judæa would acquire for the Jewish people and their religion the importance that Palestine possessed in the first century after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

It is impossible seriously to suppose that the existence of a Jewish *territorium* might afford legal ground for depriving the Jews of the rights of citizenship, or even for their expulsion, when the Jews themselves even yet have no desire for a Jewish State, and would be happier in any other civilized country than in a land that is still so drear

and inhospitable as Palestine. Against the proposal of the Basle Professor Heman,* that, after the inauguration of New Judæa, all Jews who do not give up the dietary laws, circumcision, and separate burial-grounds, should surrender German citizenship, an energetic protest must on other grounds be opposed. It is fundamentally the same measure by which Ferdinand flooded Catholic Spain for 400 years with thousands of crypto-Jews under the disguise of Christian names. A practical solution of the Jewish question this certainly cannot claim to be. This question did not originate in the Jewish kitchen and the Jewish burial-ground; nor will it end there. Consequently, so far as we can see, no decisive change will occur in either the continuity or the character of Judaism. The Zionistic movement, which is now in the condition of struggling aspiration, will merely enhance the vitality of Judaism afresh, and

* Cf. C. F. Heman, *Das Erwachen der jüdischen Nation*, Basle, 1897, p. 178.

thus compel us to pay it something more than superficial attention. We must bring ourselves and it to a mutual understanding, and it would only be to our own injury if we should put any obstacle in the way of such an understanding.

Let no one assert, moreover, that Judaism is too unattractive to non-Jews to be considered a danger. It is, of course, not very probable that in our days Christians should secede from their faith from a conviction of the truth of the Jewish religion, although there are still too many to be found who are so far lost to proper feeling as to affect such a conviction. Such as are dissatisfied with the Christian dogmas will certainly not find security in the dogmas of Jewish orthodoxy, which in no respect are 'easier of belief.' They will rather drift ever more and more in the Unitarian direction than in that of Jewish Reform, so little of what is specifically Jewish can be found in the latter. Moreover, the voices that were raised last year (1897)

in England in favour of proclaiming a Jewish mission to Christians* will not lead up to any practical action among ourselves. But there is a mission of Judaism to Christians which has long been in existence. It makes itself felt through the spiritual influence which the Jews, quite unconsciously, exercise among us. And in virtue of this the Jewish religion is an effective force, partly by reason of its strength, the power, viz., that it really exercises over its confessors, partly by reason of its weakness, in so far as it fails to furnish its confessors with the support that Christianity yields to us. The influence of Judaism is thus directed naturally against the points in which Christianity differs from it. When these shall be removed it may be thought that the Messianic age, in which peoples and religions will in mutual love embrace each other, will dawn.

Protestants have no ground for fear. The

* See the Symposium by O. J. Simon and others, in *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, ix. 177 ff.

cry of 'Finis Germaniae,' with which the anti-Semitic movement began, originated with an atheist, and cannot be ours. Ours, rather, is the Christian duty of watchfulness, and the task not only of defending with redoubled zeal the precious truths of our faith that are attacked, but of making them shine forth in practice and conduct. Furthermore, there must be no doubt as to what these precious truths are. To this end a real knowledge of Judaism in its relation to Christianity must be acquired; and it will be part of the practice of our Christian duty to secure for ourselves the necessary instruction on this subject.

It is unmistakably clear that in such a comparison as is here contemplated true evangelical Christianity must be placed in opposition to Judaism, without any watering down and without disguise. And yet many

modern efforts which have been put forth in various forms in North America, France, Austria, and even Germany, make it necessary to insist on this emphatically. Christianity, it is thought, should, in opposition to liberal Judaism, make little of its confession of the Son of God, and, in opposition to orthodox Judaism, make little of its emancipation from the law. A special form of Christianity is urged and a special Church is advocated for the Jews, in which Old and New Testament, Law and Gospel, Synagogue and Church, shall join hands. This judaizing tendency, which has even gone to the extent of asserting, to the disparagement of Christianity, that un-Christian Israel stands within the Kingdom of God, has no Protestant, much less Lutheran, affinities.*

We evangelicals, of course, do not suppose

* This opinion is still further confirmed by the views of some Hebrew Christians in our time, who not merely pass over but actually deny Christian freedom, while asserting a continuous obligation on the part of the Christian Jew to the law. In this connection, the name of Joseph Rabinowitz of Kischinev (who is often

that the apprehension of Christian verities, which is characteristic of our Church, is necessarily the one that is final and supreme, as little also do we imagine that no other Church can or really does possess anything of Christian truth. But we are convinced, humbly thanking God for it, that no other Church possesses fragments of the truth which we do not possess, and that, through God's grace, the noblest deposit of Christian verity has been entrusted to us. We know that Greeks, Romans, and Germans have all been

mistakenly considered a supporter of these views) ought not to be appealed to, but rather that of Th. Lucky of Stanislau, who, by the medium of his magazine, *Eduth le-Israel*, has striven to give currency to his views, as well as that of J. Lichtenstein of Leipzig, whose Hebrew commentary on the New Testament I am myself publishing. But it makes all the difference whether it is a Jew (who has not quite outgrown the old system) who subscribes to such views of Judaism and the Old Testament, or whether it is (as, unhappily, has sometimes been the case) a born Protestant who does so.

See, besides, my essay, *Kirchliche Bedenken bei jüdenchristlichen Kirchenplänen*, in *Saat auf Hoffnung*, Leipzig, 1900, pp. 153-160.

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made instrumental in the advance towards truth which under God has been effected in the Church. Did we know of anything, however, in the sum of this knowledge which was only Greek and Roman, or German, and not the very truth, we should be compelled to discard it. A Protestant Christianity, the tendency of which is not in the direction of what is national, but what is universal, can only stand in relation to other confessions and religions in the proportions to which God has developed it. Nor is there any necessity to force into the background, without more ado, the characteristic expressions of its life, least of all in relation to Judaism, the distinguishing characteristic and strength of which lies principally in a mode of life which has been developed under the influence of its religion.*

* It is quite true that Christianity is not destined to denationalize the peoples. Nor has true Protestant Christianity, as such, this effect in any way. It has been described as a new principle in Christian missions to Jews that the missionary movement no longer desires to get rid of the principle of Jewish nationality. That, how-

Judaized Christianity enters into the conflict with blunted sword and broken spear. Only the unfaltering battle-cry, 'By faith alone,' can ensure success in the campaign. The frank and undisguised adoption of a consistent position which is to be expected from Christianity* we also, however, desire

ever, has never been its aim. If a nation, indeed, has only been able to prolong its existence through such means as circumcision and peculiar food-preparation, it ought to be described as long ago defunct and doomed to destruction. Zionism brings home the lesson afresh, that the vitality of the Jewish race does *not* depend upon its religious ritual. Therefore, on this ground also, Christianity has no occasion, for the sake of maintaining the existence of Jewish nationality, to amalgamate itself with Jewish ritual.

* Every form of dishonourable or pretended conversion must be carefully guarded against by a mission to Jews that is Protestant in character. Anyone who has not courage enough openly to unfurl the banner of the Gospel should not venture to take it into his hand at all. Cf. further the essay in H. Strack's *Nathanael*, a magazine devoted to the work of the Evangelical Church for Israel 1891, 161 ff.; also the article, *Falsche Wege*, 1892, 48 ff. on the question whether Jewish missions should be simple and direct in character, or mainly organized, see an article by Aug. Köhler, p. 97 ff.; in favour of organized Jewish missions, one by F. Heman.

to see taken up by Judaism. The understanding should proceed on the basis of mutual respect, avoiding all intrusion of personal offensiveness. In this connection the civil equality of both parties appears to me to be an indispensable pre-supposition for honourable warfare. However hasty it may be after so short an experience of Jewish emancipation to wish to secure a definite opinion as to its results,* it is still absolutely certain that it can only be viewed as a desirable consummation for a Christianity that is juxtaposed in opposition to Judaism. The war waged by the Russian Church against Judaism (with the assistance of an enslaving legislation), and its Jewish mission under police escort, is in reality a disgraceful defeat for Christianity. In such proceedings the Protestant Church could take no part.

* That the present condition of affairs in Germany is an unsatisfactory one is patent. But the consequences of an estrangement lasting a thousand years cannot be eliminated in two generations.

Nor is it to be supposed that in the spiritual intercourse between Church and Synagogue, the latter has had no contributions to offer from which we can have secured positive gain. The Church owes to the Jews the Greek and Latin Old Testament, the former immediately, the latter through the instrumentality of the Jewish teachers of Jerome. Similarly, it was through Jewish teachers that the knowledge of Hebrew reached us at the time of the Reformation. It was from the Synagogue, which had guarded its transmission with the utmost care, that we then received the original text of the Old Testament. Thus the Reformed Churches, which were founded and based on the original text of Holy Scripture, inherited Judaism's last great possession of sacred history. Only since then have we possessed an independent Old Testament science, whose task it is to show in increasing measure that the Old Testament finds its completion in Christ. Jewish science, however, has not, since the Middle Ages,

taken any notable part in the work on the Old Testament. No Jewish commentary of importance, no work on Introduction, no outstanding History of Old Israel, not even a noteworthy treatment of the Person of Moses, nor yet of the Mosaic Law, is to be found. A demonstration on scientific lines that Christ is not the end of the law, ought certainly to be undertaken from this quarter. From such a work we should undoubtedly derive fruitful instruction, and gain valuable stimulus in perceiving more clearly the truth and real character of the Divine Revelation, and in setting it more than ever beyond the reach of doubt. From Jewish orthodoxy, involved as it is in the meshes of its traditional belief, small help can be expected in this direction. But by work of this kind Jewish Reform, at least, ought to show, more than in the past, that it is not only able to pull down and demolish, but can also undertake the work of remodelling and reconstruction.

THAT Christianity and Judaism should stand in opposition to each other has already been asserted; and this must, of course, be the case. It remains to show in greater detail than before what are the points around which the conflict must be waged. What advantages, as compared with the Jews, do we Christians possess in our religion, to defend which, therefore, it is our bounden duty?

Wrong ideas about the relations of Judaism and Christianity are widespread. The task of correcting them will afford opportunity for putting in their place something that can lay claim to greater exactitude. First of all shall be mentioned the opinion, which is often heard, that Jewish Orthodoxy stands for 'Faith,' Jewish Reform simply representing 'Unbelief,' and that Christianity, in consequence, stands nearer Orthodoxy than Reform. Under the designation 'Orthodoxy' are included all Jewish movements that depend on the traditional law, while to the category of

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'Reform' all those which take up an attitude of greater freedom with regard to this law belong.* Obviously, when Judaism is regarded from the religious standpoint, those (their numbers are by no means few) must be left out of account who are altogether estranged from Judaism as a religion, and whose Judaism, as is the case with many Zionists, principally consists in an acutely developed race-feeling. Jewish Reform does not imply reformation in our sense of the term, but rather an attempt (in itself thoroughly praiseworthy) to give to Judaism, by emancipating it from its legalistic and formalistic exterior, a form compatible

* Judaism has no special 'confessions of faith,' and is represented in the greater number of German countries merely by individual communities, which are bound together by no constitution and dispense with official representation as regards the State. Consistently with this the different shades of Judaism are of a very changeable character. Every Rabbi represents, for the most part, only his own individual conception of Judaism. Those whose ideas are most acceptable to the majority of the community's representatives are appointed to office by the community.

with our system of culture which has been developed under the influence of Christianity. It is the perception that such an 'unshackling' of Judaism endangered its consistency and independence among the spiritual forces of the time that has led latterly to a revival of Jewish orthodoxy. Even those for whom the old forms had lost their particular meaning returned to them for the sake of preserving Judaism. I should be at a loss to discover on what grounds this phenomenon could be described as satisfactory from the Christian standpoint. It is not as if it were concerned with a return to 'faith,' least of all with belief in the Scriptures, which, in the circles of Jewish Orthodoxy, have been overlaid with a mass of traditionalism. The truth is that both Orthodoxy and Reform, though in different ways, are equally far removed from what is regarded by us as genuine faith. Consequently they adopt towards Christianity, so far as they take it into account at all—which is very seldom the case—essentially the same atti-

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tude.* The appreciative epithets which reformed Judaism, in agreement with a good deal of nominal Christianity, applies to the Person of Jesus conceal the real state of the case only from the uninitiated. Hence it is also clear that Christianity and Judaism are not differentiated as New and Old Testament.

We Christians have the whole Bible in our possession, and for us there is as little inducement as there is possibility of separating the Old Testament from the New. Both have for us been welded together into an indissoluble whole by God Himself. The case is exactly the reverse with the Jews, who refuse to recognize any such connection. Orthodoxy sees in Jesus an irreconcilable contrast to the

* In this category is not to be included the orthodox Judaism of Eastern Europe, which only sees Christianity in the distorted form exhibited in the Greek and Roman Church, and forms its idea of the Person of Jesus from the puerile fables of the Jewish "Life of Jesus." In these circles the Person of Jesus is the object of an absolutely morbid hatred which will not even permit the pronounciation of His Name.

Law of Moses. Reformed Judaism delights in insisting how thoroughly Jewish Jesus is. According to them it was Paul who first severed Christianity from the religion of the Old Testament. We, indeed, are very far from asserting that Christianity stands in as close a connection with the Old Testament as with the New. Views of this kind could only be acceptable to those present-day Christians who are of opinion that God's revelation in Christ is nothing more than the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy.* Such, then, by the confusion (which is so dear to them) of the Old and New Testament divisions of God's Word falsify the real character of the Divine Revelation. In reality, the revelation of God in Christ goes far beyond any prediction. But on this predictive element the Christian

* The case was different in early times, when the Old Testament, interpreted in accordance with the New, was put on a level with the New Testament. The plan which was possible then can no longer be pursued, now that the Old Testament is understood in accordance with its own special spirit, and merely serves to illustrate the New.

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Faith does in the first place rest, and primarily it is in virtue of this that we are brought into relation with the Old Testament, because it is to the Old Testament that this Revelation appeals as the document of a uniquely continuous Divine manifestation.

Similarly, Judaism is very far from being the religion of the Old Testament. Jewish orthodoxy is based on the Talmudic tradition of the post-Christian period, and is therefore in many respects of more recent origin than Christianity. Reformed Judaism either is or aims at being the most improved form of Jewish religion ; it sees in the mediæval religious philosophy, and, moreover, in Talmudism, earlier stages of the evolutionary history of the religion which finds its completion in reform itself. Just as Orthodoxy judges the Old Testament according to the standard of Rabbinic tradition, so Reform substitutes its special Jewish religious conceptions for the thoughts of the Old Testament. Hence in Christianity the New Testa-

ment does not occupy a position corresponding to that of the Old Testament among the Jews, but rather a place similar to that filled among the latter by Talmudic tradition and modern Jewish thought.

Nor do Judaism and Christianity stand without any sort of nearer qualification related to each other as the religions of this life and of the future life.

At the beginning of our era there existed, in opposition to one another, within the ranks of the Jewish people the parties of the Sadducees and Pharisees ; the former denied the resurrection of the dead, the latter acknowledged it. Jesus, even as Christianity as a whole has done, ranged Himself on this point on the side of the Pharisees. But Talmudic Judaism is a development of Pharisaism. It refuses a portion in eternal life to those who deny the resurrection, and has emphatically declared that man—in the service of the law—is called upon to renounce the enjoyment of this world in order to gain the next. The promises of

the Law of Moses referring to this life were, on this view, applied to the next. Mediæval Jewish religious philosophy has afterwards in this connection thought more of the future happiness of the soul of the pious wise man ; in this it is followed, with a slightly different trend given to the idea, by modern Judaism. Yet side by side with it there proceeds an unmistakable present-world tendency in the religious point of view. The Sabbath festival of 'Orthodoxy' has in its purpose, to no small degree, an element of earthly enjoyment. The celebration of the New Year and Day of Atonement, according to the notions attached to it by orthodox Judaism, instead of mitigating or banishing the fear of death, strengthens it. Reformed Judaism also, in its anxiety to avoid ascetic tendencies, is often unable to lay that stress upon the future life which, according to its own theory, it ought to lay.

In Christianity the limitations of the present life are overcome—not by a particular dogma divergent from Judaism, but by the historic

fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and by the living Person of the Risen. He who belongs to the Risen One is by that very fact in this present life united to the next.

The Risen Christ unites in Himself the Beyond of the present world as well as the world-consummation of the future. Not only is the reality of both guaranteed by Him, but in Him both are alike present intuitively to faith. Through the Risen One Christianity possesses a power over this life and death which Judaism altogether lacks. If His living Person is disregarded, I should be at a loss to know wherein in this respect the superiority of Christianity consisted.

Just as inapposite is the differentiation of Christianity and Judaism (which is sometimes met with) as the religion of love and the religion of hate. The Old Testament enjoins love, moreover, of the stranger settled in Palestine. Strangers of foreign race for the most part remain outside its purview. In neither case is hatred of strangers as such anywhere

taught. Later on the Judaism of the Dispersion had good reason to give every consideration in its jurisprudence to non-Jews. At this time the equality before the law which the Mosaic legislation safeguarded for the resident stranger was not transferred to the non-Jew, but for his benefit a special legal division of second rank was created. This circumstance has been made the most of by anti-Semitism, as though non-Jews had been written down without a legal status, or even their destruction had been enjoined.* Still, it remains true that Talmudism in this respect falls behind the best traditions of the Old Testament. Only by degrees did modifications of the position taken up arise, about which Talmudism itself declared that their full practical application was forbidden out

* See against it my publications—I regret to say not yet out of date:—*Die Tötung Ungläubiger nach talm-rabbin. Recht* (1885); *Jüdisches Fremdenrecht* (1888); my opinion advanced in the *Berliner Tageblatt* for June 4, 1891 (*Die Frage des rituellen Mordes*); also my essays in *Nathanael*, 1892, p. 141 ff. and 181 ff.

of respect for the honour of the Divine Name. But in our century West-European Judaism, at any rate—and that, too, in all its parties—under the pressure of the humanitarian forces of the age, proclaims the principle of love of one's fellow-creatures both inwardly and outwardly. This must be recognized as a notable advance. In this universal principle Judaism and Christianity are in thorough accord.

The same is the case with regard to the duty of love towards enemies. Jesus, as is well known, said (Matt. v. 43 f.):—*Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you.* This saying has always appeared a somewhat startling one.* Nowhere in the Old Testament is a command to be found to hate one's enemy; on the other hand, exhortations are met with urging love towards enemies. And yet Jesus is right. His saying

* Cf. further, *Nathanael*, 1897, pp. 169–172.

is nothing more than a sharp incisive formulation of the principle of requiting like with like: "As thou doest to me, I will do to thee!" This principle is in fact the prevailing one in the Old Testament. Moreover, Jesus does not describe it as in itself a false principle. He has merely declared it to be inadmissible for the members of the Kingdom of God. God alone can and must exact retribution, and so may constituted authority, provided it wields the sword of God. To the individual Christian as such the struggle for *his own* rights is not allowable, but he must devote himself rather to the struggle for *the* right and against *the* wrong. In the person of one who wrongs him he loves the fellow-creature, and hates his own evil treatment at the hands of another just because it harms the wrongdoer. Thus the idea of retributive action has in Christianity been forced into the background through the command of love. Talmudic Judaism substantially followed the Old Testament, and therefore has been unable to

establish Love as the controlling principle of ethical conduct. It was prevented from doing so more particularly by the fact that in its conception Law and Religion almost coincided, and to *Law* the retributive idea is indispensable. A further obstacle lay in the position assigned to strangers in jurisprudence and ethics. The injunctions about love of enemies which the older Rabbinic literature contains refer only to Israelitish enemies, not to foreigners. The new Judaism has in this respect also, so far as it is anti-legalistic, given up the old standpoint in its teaching.

A notable difference between Christianity and Judaism appears, however, in the attitude adopted towards the fallen, the sinner, the unbeliever. The Jews said of Jesus with surprise: "*This man receives sinners and eats with them!*" Such a proceeding was, in fact, altogether novel, unprecedented among heathen and Israel alike. It is true the Old Testament by no means gives up the sinner at once and altogether; it still has for him

earnest admonitions for amendment, but only for the penitent may the way of approach to the Divine pardon be opened up. But few traces are discoverable in the Old Testament of a condescension to the ungodly that availed for his help.* Such condescension, such graciousness was, however, above all others, peculiar to Jesus.

Rabbinic Judaism, on the other hand, has aggravated the severity of the Old Testament standpoint still further, and in speaking of the sinner, the untaught, the unbeliever, has

* The most important instance of this is the course of the Divine action as described in Is. xliii. 24 f., and that of His servant in Is. liii. To the same category belongs the intercessory prayer of Moses for his ungodly people, Ex. xxxii. 32 ; not, however, Abraham's prayer for Sodom, Gen. xviii. 23 ff.; the latter passage has been made the subject of a reference by S. Meyer in a reply dealing with a report of this lecture (see *Die Laubhütte*, an Israelitish family magazine, xv. (1898), No. 12). Here, strictly speaking, in the case of Abraham it is not the deliverance of the ungodly Sodomites that is the purpose dominating his action, but the demonstration of God's justice, which will not allow the pious to perish for the sake of the ungodly.

employed very harsh language.* Of late, this attitude has no longer met with approval ; but a certain practical deficiency still remains. Judaism exhibits no lack of benevolence, even outside the circle of its race-connection. It possesses, however, nothing corresponding to the Christian efforts for saving the lost, nothing parallel to our home and foreign missions ; nor can it possess anything of the kind, because it is deficient in the principle of Love. Towards matters of this kind, it to-day occupies a position just as lacking in intelligent sympathy as that once occupied by the Pharisees towards Jesus. To superficial observers it might possibly seem that the superiority of Christianity is inconsiderable if Judaism now, like Christianity, teaches love of neighbour and love towards enemies, and only shows itself somewhat inert perhaps in displaying love towards the sinner. But no

* The much-belauded patience of Hillel, in the face of tiresome questions, in no respect alters the case, and has nothing in common with love towards the sinner.

evangelical could estimate love of the sinner so lightly. To him the most important element, in love of neighbour generally, as in love towards enemies, is especially the love of sinners which, in a fellow-being polluted with sin, never loses sight of the man redeemed by God himself with the most priceless of ransoms, towards whom, therefore, not merely reciprocal but self-denying love is due. The main point, however, is that the strength of a religion lies not so much in its general moral ideas, which are common to all the more cultured religions, but in the way these moral ideas are connected with the religious ones, or rather—to speak more correctly—with religion as centred in a person, viz., God.

This connection Christianity has in the crucified Christ. The man who comes to God through Him and in the condescension of Jesus to the sinner recognizes and experiences the love of God—to him, as often as he approaches God, self-sacrificing love

must come home as making a direct moral claim.

Christianity, on this account, has not the least ground for presumption. The little love of sinners that we can lay claim to possess, we exclusively owe not only to the word and example of our Lord Jesus Christ—who died for sinners and prayed for His murderers—but, above everything, to the experimental knowledge that in Him the grace of God manifested itself to us personally while we were yet aliens and ungodly. What we possess of love is, however, but a shadow of what we should and could possess. I am convinced that if Christ's Spirit had at all times been the impelling force in this matter among us, we should not to-day in Germany have any practical reason for talking about Judaism. We should have no Jews left in the land to discuss.

It is quite correct to say: Christianity is the religion of faith, Judaism a religion of works. But it is necessary in this matter to

guard against misunderstanding. Christian religion also speaks of works, while Judaism is not without faith. If in the category of faith the thought of trust in God is the most important one, it is not to be denied that the example of Abraham has also left its mark in Judaism. No prayer or hope of the Jews is conceivable that is not based on a real trust in God. Moreover, faith in the sense of the certainty that comes from definite teaching about God and His operation in the world is as inseparable from Judaism as from every other religion. Moses Mendelssohn, it is true, boasted formerly that the superiority of Judaism consists in the fact that it binds conduct, but leaves the intellect free. To-day he would no longer find it possible to reiterate this assertion, for the very good reason that a considerable number of Jewish religious books, which are modelled on the Christian catechisms, could immediately be adduced to contradict him. But even at the time he was wrong; since the sanction for conduct which, according

to his assumption, was furnished by the Mosaic-Rabbinic law, has as its necessary presupposition a considerable amount of dogma, without which indeed it would have no particular relation to religion at all. It is merely generally recognized formulations of these dogmas that are lacking—only this circumstance, it would appear to me, has been anything but helpful to the Jews in the way of furnishing proof positive against the attacks of anti-Semitism.

On the Jewish side it is widely assumed that Christianity, as contra-distinguished from Judaism, is merely characterized by a number of irrational dogmas like the doctrine of the Trinity and of the Incarnation, and that saving faith consists merely in the submission of the reason to these dogmas. Such a representation is in some respects applicable to the Roman conception of faith, which demands complete submission to the whole body of doctrine of the Catholic Church, not only so far as it may be known to the believer, but even beyond

such limits. This is a real *sacrificio dell' intelletto*. We Protestants, however, know full well that the sacrifice of the intellect, even if it be accompanied with numberless good works, does not help to salvation. We give the name of saving faith only to that heart-trust in the grace given by God to the sinner in the person of the crucified Christ, which puts us in a peaceful and childlike relation towards God. Such faith, then, according to its nature, can never remain inert without works, just as little as a child that passionately clings to its father could conceivably exist without exhibiting practical obedience to his will. And yet the acts of obedience do not make the child; the bent of the heart alone is the decisive factor. Therefore we speak of a justification *solâ fide*, 'by faith alone.'

This evangelical faith is alien to the Jew. He knows indeed of God's indulgence towards human weakness, and looks for God's forgiveness of his sins. But he considers that

the God who has created man a creature of sense must *necessarily* be lenient and forgiving. To Christianity he generally ascribes the teaching that the sin of mankind which is believed to be put away by Christ, is guilt inherited from man's fall in Adam. We Christians, however, in the operation of God's grace which manifests itself to us in Christ, think *primarily* of the guilt which we ourselves, through our own individual sins, have contracted towards God, while at the same time we are also fully conscious that in this respect we stand on common ground with the whole human race, whose natural tendency is contrary to God, so that, apart from special action on God's part for our redemption, all men would sink down utterly into corruption.

Now this latter position is to the Jews quite intolerable. They form (and, as they suppose, with justice) a much higher estimate of the excellence of human nature, and are convinced that man can unaided help

himself. By their own understanding and their own strength they would be saved. Redemption for their people from the prison-house of the exile they do look for from God; redemption from the guilt of sin, so that man is thereby placed in a new relation towards God, they have no conception of, least of all that such a consummation should be reached through a special act of self-revelation on God's part. So it is that the very feeling for the institution of sacrifice with its work of expiation has totally disappeared in Judaism, and the remarkable fact is to be noticed that whereas many theologians would be glad to banish the idea of expiation from Christianity as 'Jewish,' by the Jews themselves the same idea is rejected as 'un-Jewish' or 'heathenish.'* Here, as on other points, Judaism is seen to be in agreement with

* See my essay, *Gesetz, Tugend und Versöhnung im neueren Judentum*, in *Nathanael*, 1891, p. 25 ff.; and my monograph, *Jesaja 53, das Prophetenwort von Sühnleiden des Heilmittlers*, Leipzig (J. C. Heinrichs), 1891, p. 15 f., 41 f.

present-day forces within our own ranks. This fact is in itself a serious warning to us to take strict heed whether we too are safeguarding the well-being of the Protestant faith. If this be not so, the struggle against Roman Christianity as well as against Judaism would be vain. *Justification before God is impossible apart from Christ, and therefore is effected without works, by faith alone.* If this ceases to be the result of our life's experience daily renewed, then we cease to be Christians, much less evangelicals, and have no right to protest *in the name of Christianity* against any religion or creed whatsoever.

IN this the most important distinction between Christianity and Judaism is involved. It consists briefly in the fact that we possess, while Judaism does not possess, a Christ who

died for our sins and rose from the dead. To this point, however, we must devote closer attention. It is commonly said that the Jews await the coming of a *future* Messiah, while Christians believe in one who has *already appeared*. But in such a view the main point is overlooked. Judaism is rightly so called not only because it is, as a matter of fact, the religion peculiar to the Jews, but because this religion considers the Jewish people as its own special confessors and witnesses for all time, for the reason that it desires to remain always a 'Jewish' religion in the special sense of the term. Jewish Reform, too, even when it gives up the ceremonial law, firmly adheres to this as a principle in order that a special dogma may still be preserved to its religion. Christianity, likewise, has good reason for the name it bears, since its peculiar distinction, in fact, is to be the Christ-religion, that is, the realization of a relation to God in which Christ occupies the central point. For Judaism the *Messianic*

Age and the Redemption have always been more important than the Messiah. The position occupied in Jewish literature by the Messiah may be compared to that of a scarlet thread in a rope; the thread can be extracted without affecting the strength of the rope. The personal Messiah is no essential constituent element in the Jewish religion, and if his advent is awaited, this is quite independent of the relation of man or the Jew to God. The figure of the Messiah remains one of quite secondary importance.

How different in Christianity! Even if we did not await the return of Him who has been exalted to the throne of God, Christ would still be the one Person to whom we owe the forgiveness of our sins, who mediates to us the strength of a new life, who offers us the earnest of complete happiness undimmed by death and universal dissolution; our patient Teacher whose word we obey; our gracious Lord whom, living and dying, we serve; the

man Jesus who could not and dare not assume the supreme place in our religious life unless He were 'God,' and in very truth God's own Son, who has never sought His own glory, but ever His Father's glory only, and who therefore can never separate us from God, but only bring us to Him.

It is not the historic Jesus, but rather the place He occupies among us, that constitutes the special stone of stumbling in Christianity to the Jews. Of the latter, those who most emphatically demur to the position assumed by Jesus in Christianity call it idolatry; while those whose expression of opinion is less strenuous say that it is a pagan defect in our religion, about which it may perhaps be conceded that it may have been necessary for us non-Jews; that in any case, however, it is but a transition point-of-view which must some day give place to the purer views of God belonging to Judaism. But just as it is impossible for Judaism to become the world-religion with-

out losing its identity, so a Christianity is equally inconceivable that is without Christ.

Does Judaism, then, in effect possess an advantage in its unitarian views of God for which the Messiah is without significance? First of all, it is to be remarked that even Jewish religion is not without the idea of a mediator. I am not speaking of the mediatorial persons of Jewish Mysticism, in which, nevertheless, millions of East-European Jews believe. But for all Jews Moses is still a unique mediator between God and His people, and the people of Israel the mediator between God and mankind. Then, again, the Old Testament long ago described God as 'One' in contra-distinction to the multiplicity of heathen gods; Judaism has thought to understand the 'unity' of this God the better by defining it—in opposition to Christianity—as not divisible. The unity of the 'Only One' is, according to the second article of the Creed of Maimonides, unique

of its kind; it is of such a character that the human understanding can distinguish in it no sort of plurality whatever. Is this 'unity,' defined, as it is, with the help of Greek philosophical terms, really of any particular value for religion? The indivisible One is, from a practical point of view, indistinguishable from nothingness, and, besides, is an idea entirely unproductive of anything of value for a philosophic system. The full development of the Jewish idea of God in conscious opposition to the Christian has not enriched but rather impoverished, not strengthened but rather weakened, Jewish religion. The 'Only One' of Judaism can indeed be worshipped with shrinking reverence and resignation. But a relationship with Him, such as that of a child with its father, is hardly conceivable. Where the development of such a relationship is regarded as the end and aim of all religion, Judaism must, of necessity, be said to be deficient in just what is most important

for the best type of religion. We are met with the objection: "But the God who is approached without mediator is all the nearer; in Judaism, therefore, a closer drawing-nigh on the part of God is experienced." Such an assertion we must take leave to question, and that on the ground of personal experience.

If we read Jewish text-books and sermons, if we visit the Jewish Synagogue services (without regard to special Jewish beliefs and customs), the sensation we experience is that of desolation, of emptiness and coldness, however much we may admire the fertility in ideas, the masterly style and zeal, the noble sentiments of the orator or writer. A religion where the closest nearness of God is enjoyed must show evidence of much greater religious warmth than this.

A similar thing is to be observed among ourselves. It is not those of us who assign as low a position as possible to Christ who are

the most religious. The Jews make a mistake when they think to find in such Christians a proof of the truth of Judaism. The fact rather is that the position that not merely in theory but in practice is assigned to Him constitutes an infallible standard, an unfailing thermometer for measuring our religious warmth. The nearer to Christ, the nearer to God !

And we, even when we examine our own innermost self, are yet self-compelled to declare : If we lost Him we should lose God. In the Son we possess the Father. Far from Christ we are far from God !

So the matter stands thus : On the one side God and His Anointed, on the other side the Solitary One ! This is the antithesis that divides Judaism and Christianity to-day. It has been so from the beginning.

The birth of Christianity as an independent religion took place at the moment when Jewish authority pronounced sentence of death over Jesus. Jesus was then asked whether He was the Messiah. He could have replied: "I am a servant of God, a teacher of the truth!" and no one would have been able to gainsay Him. He might even have said: "Yes, I am God's Anointed!" and no ground for a death-sentence would have been given. He, however, knew full well what He was doing when He cried to His judges: "*Henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven!*" By this speech He, to the astonishment of the judges themselves, handed to them the very weapon which was to slay Him. Of a man who shares God's majesty the Law of Moses knows nothing. The man who claims divine honour for himself is a blasphemer. This judgment of the Jewish Supreme Tribunal is still the judgment of Judaism to-day.

64 *Christianity and Judaism*

Christianity ranges itself on the side of the Condemned.

In truth only two possibilities are before us: it is only possible either with the Jews to condemn, or—in the presence of the Condemned to adore.



